



NEWSLETTER

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY



WW II HEROES RECOGNIZED

This past week the following counties hosted events to honor our World War II Veterans—Davison, Gregory, Haakon, Hamlin, Jackson, Jones, Lyman and Mellette. Some of the presentations were made at large events and some were made one-on-one in nursing homes.

Hats off to Davison County's Debbie Emme for coordinating a group event as well as some personal recognitions for veterans in nursing homes.

One of the most unique presentations was arranged by Gary Sletto (Jones, Lyman, and Mellette County VSO). Sletto arranged for the honoring ceremony and medal presentation during the 50th Annual Jones County Invitational Basketball Tournament in the Harold Thune Auditorium in Murdo, with over 800 in attendance. In addition, Gary had Senator John Thune present the medals to our World War II heroes, one of which was Sen. Thune's father, Harold Thune.



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NCA UPDATE

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has published a revised *VA Form 40-1330, Claim for Standard Government Headstone or Marker* and *VA Form 40-1330M, Claim for a Government Medallion for Placement in a Private Cemetery*.

Both forms are now available on the VA's website at www.va.gov/forms. All other versions of the VA Form 40-1330 are obsolete. Please ensure the most current version dated December 2017 is submitted. For your convenience, we have included a direct link to both claim forms: <https://www.va.gov/vaforms/va/pdf/VA40-1330.pdf> and <https://www.va.gov/vaforms/va/pdf/VA40-1330M.pdf>

What Was Changed On The Forms?

1. On the *VA Form 40-1330, Claim for Standard Government Headstone or Marker*, the VA updated the selection box for each eligible claimant (as identified under 38 CFR 38.600(a)(1)).
2. On the *VA Form 40-1330M, Claim for a Government Medallion for Placement in a Private Cemetery*, they updated the General Information Sheet to reflect that veterans who served on or after April 6, 1917, and whose grave in a private cemetery is marked with a privately purchased headstone or marker are eligible for a Government medallion. Previously, only veterans who died on or after November 1, 1990 were eligible for the Government medallion.

Additionally, both forms now:

- Ask for demographic information (which is optional) for statistical reporting purposes only,
- Allow claimants to request one or more Presidential Memorial Certificates, and
- Include a fax cover sheet with a checklist for convenience.

Should you have additional concerns regarding the headstone and marker, and medallion claim forms, please contact Inquiry Routing & Information System <https://iris.custhelp.com>, so they can track inquiries and respond promptly.

For information on VA burial benefits, visit <http://www.cem.va.gov> or call (800) 827-1000.



DAVISON COUNTY VSO

Davison County Commissioners have selected Craig Bennett as their new County Veterans Service Officer. Craig was born and raised in Colorado Springs, Co. and joined the Navy after completing High School in 1978. He was a boiler technician for six years and then volunteered for recruiting duty and spent the next 17 years as a Navy Counselor. He retired from the Navy as a Senior Chief Navy Counselor in 2001. After retiring, he held a few positions in the Denver, CO. area until he was hired by the Federal Health Administration Center, otherwise known as ChampVa.

Craig and his wife, Sue, relocated to Mitchell, SD in 2005 for family reasons and he began working at the VA Regional Office in Sioux Falls. After nine years Craig took an early retirement and worked for Avera and a local crop insurance agent in Mitchell.

Craig has always enjoyed working with veterans and feels that this position is an honor and he looks forward to helping veterans and their families.

Craig and his wife (also retired Navy) have three sons all of which were in the Navy.

Craig's email address is craigb@davisoncounty.org



AMERICAN LEGION PRINT



The South Dakota American Legion has a new print for sale. The fourth print in a series of five is entitled, "America's Newest Heroes," and depicts 1991 to current war era.

Funds raised from the sale of the prints goes to the South Dakota American Legion Foundation - <http://www.sdlegion.org/program/sd-american-legion-foundation/>

For more information about the prints, please contact Hugh Holmes at 605.299.6314.

VALENTINES FOR VETERANS

The Sioux Falls VA Medical Center reports that tickets are available for veterans for the John Michael Montgomery Valentines for Veterans concert on Saturday, February 17. The concert will be held at 3:00 pm in the Mary W. Sommervold Hall of the Washington Pavilion (301 S. Main Avenue) in Sioux Falls.

This is a complimentary concert for veterans and their families in honor of their service to this country. Tickets are free and are available through the SFVAHCS. Please call 605.333.6851 or 605.333.6806



MJFSVH ENDOWMENT

Members of the First Congregational Church in Pierre presented a check to Secretary Zimmerman for the Michael J. Fitzmaurice Veterans Home Endowment Fund. This is the third year the Congregational Church has contributed to the fund.

The MJFSVH Endowment Fund was established by Governor Daugaard in an effort to make sure that our veterans at the Home will have what they need 25, 50, and 100 years from now.

Investment earnings from the fund can be used for activities, programs, and equipment to enhance the quality of life for the residents of the Michael J. Fitzmaurice Veterans Home.

Contributions can be made by visiting the link: <https://sdcommunityfoundation.org/for-donors/find-funds/michael-j-fitzmaurice-state-veterans-home-endowment-fund/>.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

SDDVA Secretary Larry Zimmerman participated in the South Dakota Public Radio “In the Know” program this week . You can listen to his legislative preview at the link below:

<http://listen.sdpb.org/post/2018-legislative-preview-secretary-sd-veterans-affairs-larry-zimmerman>



VABHHCS CREATIVE ARTS

The VABHHCS’s National Creative Arts competition entry deadlines are as follows: - Fort Meade—February 16, 2018, and Hot Springs—March 2, 2018.

The Fort Meade Art Show will be held March 7, 2018, and the Hot Springs Art Show will be held March 14, 2018.

MOBILE VET CENTERS

Doug McCuddin of Sioux Falls and Jeff Gorr out of Rapid City, Outreach Specialists with the Vet Centers, were in Huron and Redfield this week to provide “Combat” Veterans with information on Vet Center counseling services and referral materials to other VA and community agencies. They had their 38’ Mobile Vet Center.



Taylor Jans, Beadle/Sanborn County VSO, and Gordon Richards, Spink County VSO, as well as SDDVA Field Officer Kevin Bowen, were on hand to work with their veterans

UPCOMING EVENTS

2018

Jan 28-29—VFW Legislative Conference—Ft. Pierre AmericInn
Jan 29—VFW Legislative Reception—AmericInn—Ft. Pierre—6:00 pm—7:30 pm (CT)
Feb 11—VABHHCS Four Chaplain Service—St. Francis Catholic Church—1:30 pm (MT)
Feb 16-18—American Legion Mid Winter Conference—Oacoma
Feb 23-25—Vietnam Veterans & Era Reunion—Ramada Inn—Mitchell
Mar 4-8—National VFW Conference—Washington, DC
Mar 13—VABHHCS Veteran Town Hall and Outreach—Newcastle Senior Center—8:00 am (MT)
Mar 13—VABHHCS Veteran Town Hall and Outreach—Sundance Senior Center—1:00 pm (MT)
Apr 27-29—DAV State Convention—The Lodge—Deadwood
Jun 7-10—American Legion State Convention—Spearfish
Jun 14-17—VFW State Convention—Sioux Falls
Jul 14-17—DAV National Convention—Reno, NV
Jul 21-25—VFW National Convention—Kansas City, MO
Aug 20-24—SDDVA Benefits School—Ramkota—Pierre
Aug 20-24—American Legion National Convention—Minneapolis, MN



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